

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Statement on the Anniversary of the Birth of Mahatma Gandhi

October 1, 2009

On behalf of the American people, I want to express appreciation for the life and lessons of Mahatma Gandhi on the anniversary of his birth. This is an important moment to reflect on his message of nonviolence, which continues to inspire people and political movements across the globe.

We join the people of India in celebrating this great soul who lived a life dedicated to the cause of advancing justice, showing tolerance to all, and creating change through nonviolent resistance.

Americans owe an enormous measure of gratitude to the Mahatma. His teachings and ideals, shared with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on his 1959 pilgrimage to India, transformed American society through our civil rights movement. The America of today has its roots in the India of Mahatma Gandhi and the nonviolent social action movement for Indian independence which he led.

Tomorrow, as we remember the Mahatma on his birthday, we must renew our commitment to live his ideals and to celebrate the dignity of all human beings.

Categories: Statements by the President : Gandhi, Mahatma, anniversary of birth.

Subjects: Civil rights : Minorities :: African-American civil rights movement; India : Gandhi, Mahatma, anniversary of birth.

DCPD Number: DCPD200900771.